

### REQUEST FOR RETURN OF FORM PTO-1449

As an initial matter, Applicants respectfully request an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 from the December 12, 2005 Information Disclosure Statement.

Favorable consideration in this regard is earnestly solicited.

### REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited, in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

Claims 14 through 17, 24 through 27, and 31 through 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Niida, et al. (EP 0938218 A2). Claims 18 through 21, 24 through 27, and 35 through 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka, et al. (US 2001/0048534 A1) in view of Niida, et al.

Claims 14 through 21 and 31 through 38 are now pending, with Claims 14, 18, 31, and 35 being independent. Claims 24 through 27 and 39 through 43 have been cancelled without prejudice. Applicants have amended each of the remaining independent claims.

Independent Claim 14 is directed to an image supply device which issues a predetermined command to a recording apparatus. When the device receives a signal from the recording apparatus after the predetermined command has been issued, it determines whether or not the signal is a response to the predetermined command. In a case where it is determined that the signal is not a response to the predetermined command, control means disregards the signal, waits for a reception of the response to the predetermined command, and controls an issuing timing of a next command to the recording apparatus after reception of the response.

Independent Claim 31 is a method claim that recites features corresponding generally to those discussed above with respect to independent Claim 14.

Independent Claim 18 is directed to a recording apparatus which issues a predetermined command to an image supply device. When the apparatus receives a signal from the image supply device after issuing the predetermined command, it determines whether or not that signal is a command other than a response to the predetermined command. In a case where it is determined that the signal is a command other than a response to the predetermined command, control means preferentially processes the command received from the image supply device, sends a response to the image supply device, and controls an issuing timing of a next command to the image supply device after sending the response to the command.

Independent Claim 35 is a method claim that recites features generally corresponding of those discussed above with respect to independent Claim 18.

Thus, the present invention, as recited in each of the independent claims, provides for distinguishing between signals which are responses to predetermined commands and signals which are not responses to the predetermined commands. So, when different devices in a network are issuing crossing signals/commands, the present invention can determine when a received signal is an actual response.

Niida, et al. discloses setting a period for retry when a response packet indicative of “ack\_busy\_A” is received, and retrying the command after the retry period elapses. In this way, Niida, et al. discloses waiting for a predetermined period if a busy signal is received from a partner in response to a command. The system then issues the command again after the elapse of the predetermined period.

Niida, et al., however, does not teach or suggest discarding a signal if the signal is not a response to the predetermined command, and waiting for reception of the actual response. Niida, et al. also fails to describe or suggest controlling an issuing timing of a next command to the partner after the reception of the response. Instead, Niida, et al. describes retrying commands based on predetermined timing after busy signals.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that the present invention recited in claims 14 and 31 is not taught or suggested by Niida, et al.

Tanaka, et al. discloses direct communication between a camera and a printer. The Office Action acknowledges that that document does not disclose the determination with respect to responses recited in the independent claims.

Accordingly, Applicants also believe that the present invention recited in claims 18 and 35 is not taught or suggested by Niida, et al. in view of Tanaka, et al.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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